

It shouldn't have taken this long to confirm someone as obviously qualified as Shalanda Young. She has been leading the OMB for nearly a year. She knows the budget and appropriations processes like the back of her hand. She has proven capable of working with Republicans and Democrats alike, and it was through her guidance that the administration notched some of its biggest victories, including the passage of the bipartisan infrastructure law.

Shalanda Young is one of the most effective Cabinet leaders to have the label of "Acting" in a very long time, but it is long past time for that word to drop from her job title. I look forward to the Senate officially confirming Ms. Young as OMB Director later today.

CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT

Mr. President, now on the omni, later this afternoon, I will join with a number of my Senate colleagues in attending a signing ceremony at the White House for the 2022 omnibus funding bill, one of many significant and bipartisan accomplishments of the Senate in recent weeks.

In a 50-50 Senate, it is no small feat for this Chamber to pass the boldest and most significant funding package that Congress has seen in a long, long time. Under this new package, students, parents, working families, small businesses, and veterans will see costs go down and greater investments go their way. Our troops are going to get a much needed raise. Student loan borrowers will see their maximum Pell grant awards increase by the largest amount in over a decade, impacting 7 million students, not to mention their families.

We are giving parents more help for affording childcare and seniors more help to receive care at home.

For the first time in years, the Violence Against Women Act, one of the most important pieces of legislation in the last 30 years, will finally be renewed, offering lifesaving resources for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

And, of course, we are keeping our promise to Ukraine by providing nearly \$14 billion in humanitarian and military aid. This means food and shelter for the millions trapped in war, relief for the now-3 million refugees fleeing the country, and funding to transfer Javelins, Stingers, and other anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons to the Ukrainian fighting forces.

The Ukrainian people are not alone in their struggle against Vladimir Putin's savage war. I commend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who accelerated the passage of this emergency funding, and I again commend President Biden for his handling of the crisis to date. As I said weeks ago, the President deserves immense credit for keeping the allies together against Putin, imposing crippling sanctions on Russia, and responding to a turbulent conflict with clarity and with strength.

Some were pushing the President to do too much too soon, risking an esca-

lation of the crisis and risking that our allies would not join us, but so far, the President's approach has been right on target. Thanks to the President's approach, Putin is now one of the most reviled and isolated leaders that the world has seen in a very long time.

For this reason alone, signing the omnibus into law is a major accomplishment, and I thank the President, Senators LEAHY and DURBIN, and all our appropriators and Members on both sides of the aisle for getting it done.

NOMINATION OF KETANJI BROWN JACKSON

Mr. President, now on SCOTUS, what do retired conservative judges, a group of 80 current and retired State attorneys general, the U.S. Black Chambers, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police all share in common? You might ask yourself that question. Well, they are just a few—just a few—of the many, many groups and individuals who have endorsed Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson for the Supreme Court.

When I met with Judge Jackson a few weeks ago, it was immediately clear why so many different groups have sung her praises. On top of her brilliance, on top of her experience, she is unusually gifted at seeing and appreciating both sides of an argument. It is little surprise, then, that in the course of rendering nearly 550 decisions as a Federal district judge, she was rarely reversed by higher courts. In fact, she has been reversed perhaps around a dozen times out of 550 decisions. That is about 2 percent—2 percent—of the time.

This week, Members from both sides of the aisle will continue meeting with the judge. I believe, under Senator DURBIN's leadership, every member of the Judiciary Committee has had the chance to meet with her. I am confident that any new conclusions my colleagues make about her will keep pointing in one direction: Judge Jackson is brilliant. She is beloved. She belongs on the Supreme Court. It is worth repeating the three b's over and over again—brilliant, beloved, belongs—because those three words are undoubtedly true as applied to Judge Jackson.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

UKRAINE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, American strength is not a provocation. American strength secures deterrence and peace. It is American hesitancy and weakness which our adversaries see as an invitation. It is a simple fact. We relearned it the hard way many times in our history. It should form the cornerstone of any administration's foreign policy, but every day brings new distressing signs that the Biden administration forgets this lesson.

President Biden hesitated and waited to reinforce our NATO allies with more

American troops out of fear that it might provoke Putin. President Biden hesitated and waited to send Stingers to the Ukrainians out of fears that it might provoke Putin. President Biden declined to send support and training to Ukraine in December because he feared it might provoke Putin.

Here is a headline from earlier this week:

Pentagon push to send more trainers to Ukraine was scrapped in December amid White House fears of provoking Russia.

Last week, President Biden publicly split from our ally Poland and scrapped a plan to get airplanes to Ukraine because our administration feared it might—you guessed it—provoke Putin. Predictably, Putin has not pulled his punches as a thank-you to President Biden for pulling his punches.

American strength is not the provocation; American weakness is. We need to help get air defense systems to Ukraine without wasting another second.

But, meanwhile, the Biden administration is already replaying this mistaken philosophy with another adversary. Iran watched our humiliating, botched retreat in Afghanistan. They have watched the Biden administration squabble with our Middle Eastern partners while removing sanctions from Iran's own terrorist proxies in Yemen.

The Iranians have taken the measure of this administration. This weekend, even as the Biden administration is reportedly putting the finishing touches on an agreement deal that would massively favor Iran over America, they unleashed an audacious—audacious—missile strike into the Kurdistan region of Iraq that came very close to hitting our U.S. consulate.

How will our Commander in Chief respond? The record is not encouraging. Deterrence of Iran has steadily eroded under his tenure. The worse the Iranians behave, the more desperate the Biden administration seems to be to give them concessions.

Judging by public reports, the deal that President Biden is preparing would impose fewer, weaker, and shorter restrictions on Iran than even the deeply flawed 2015 deal, while giving them major and lasting relief from sanctions.

The deal would reportedly not even touch Iran's ballistic missile program. So Iran lobbs missiles toward our facilities, and we give Iran a huge influx of cash and a relaxation of pressure.

Iran clearly does not fear that they will pay a price for threatening American interests. They must be made to think again.

Yesterday, Senate Republicans sent the administration a letter expressing our grave concerns that they are preparing once again to give away the store. Republicans stand ready to work together on a real, tough agreement that blocks Iran's path to nuclear weapons, constrains its missile programs, and confronts its support for terrorism. But if the administration